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State Fire Marshal Announces 2006 Record Low Number of Civilian Fire Deaths

STOW, Massachusetts – Wednesday, January 24, 2007 – State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan said “Massachusetts has experienced a record low number of fire deaths for the third year in a row.” He added, “In 2006, preliminary figures of the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) show there were 43 civilian fire deaths shattering the previous record low of 52 deaths in 2004 and 2005.”

Smoking Once Again Remains the #1 Cause of Fire Deaths

Coan said, “Preliminary analysis shows that smoking is once again the leading cause of fatal fires and fire deaths in Massachusetts. We expect this will change when the sale of only fire-safe cigarettes are introduced into Massachusetts beginning in January of 2008. We eagerly anticipate more record low numbers of fire deaths in the years to come.”

43 Fire Deaths - Only One Child

Of the 43 fire deaths in Massachusetts last year, 27 were men, 15 were women and one was a child. Coan said, “We are not aware of ever having such a low number of children die in fires in the Commonwealth.”

Thirty-four (34) people died in 29 structure fires. Six (6) people died in six motor vehicle fires. Three (3) people died in three outside and other fires. In 2006, there were 6.8 fire deaths per 1 million residents in Massachusetts, down from 8.2 fire deaths per 1 million population in 2005 and 2004.

Boston, Worcester & Springfield Together Had Only 5 Deaths

The three largest cities in the Commonwealth, Boston, Worcester and Springfield, had only five fire-related deaths combined. Boston had two, Worcester had one and Springfield had two fire-related deaths in 2006.

Administrative Services • Hazardous Materials Response
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No Fire-Related Firefighter Deaths

There were no fire-related firefighter deaths in 2006.

Smoke Detectors & Escape Plans Save Lives

Coan said, "Working smoke alarms save lives. "Early detection of even the smallest fire gives occupants time to safely exit the building and notify the local fire department while waiting for the professionals who have the proper tools and training to effectively manage the situation. He added, "Smoke detectors are just the first step in the process. It's important to hold fire drills at home so once a detector sounds, everyone will know how to get safely outside to the meeting place."

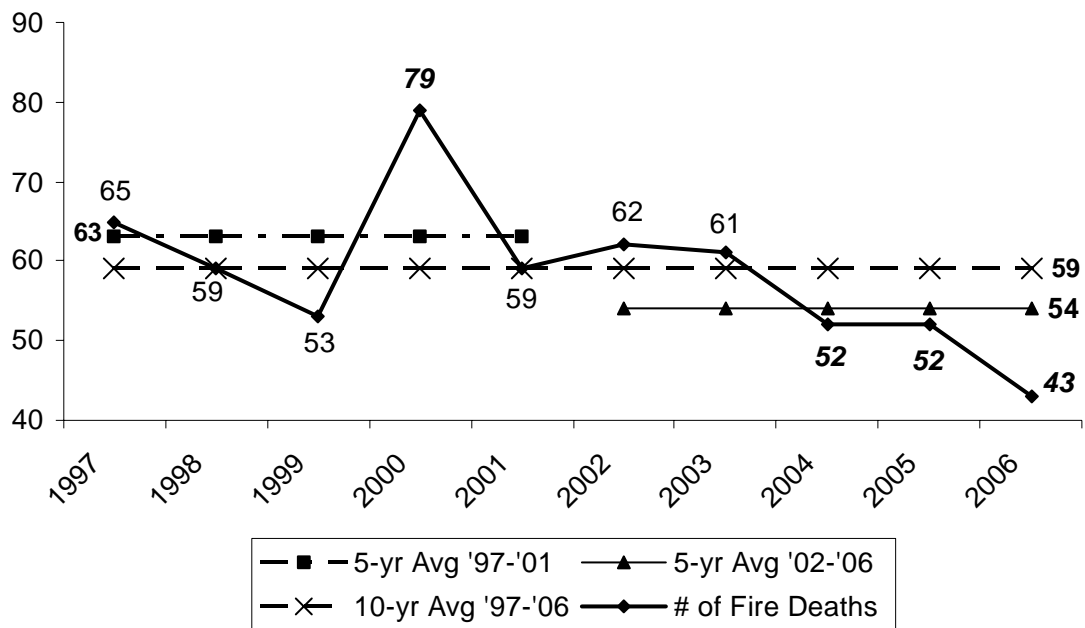
Commonwealth Making Progress Against Fire Deaths

State Fire Marshal Stephen Coan said, "Although one death or injury is one too many, we are making strides in reducing the vulnerability of Massachusetts residents being killed or injured in a fire." Marshal Coan went on to say, "Our relentless goal is to reduce the deaths, injuries and damage fires do in the Commonwealth and to send each and every firefighter home safely at the end of their shift."

Fire Deaths Well Below 5- and 10-Year Averages

The forty-three (43) deaths are well below both the 10-year average of 59 fire deaths (1997 – 2006) and the 5-year average of 54 fire deaths (2002 – 2006).

Civilian Fire Deaths by Year



Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System

Fire death statistics are based on available records going back to World War II and data from the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (1982-2006). Fire

departments are required to report all fires and explosions with a dollar loss or human casualty to the Mass. Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS).